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Clearance Impact Assessment (Sri Lanka)

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NPA

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**CLEARANCE IMPACT ASSESSMENT
NPA/HDU
2003**

**conducted by
TASK IMPACT ASSESSMENT TEAM
NPA/HDU**



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This report was written by Tom Gillhespy (tgillhespy@yahoo.co.uk), as an NPA Technical Advisor, in January 2004. The surveys used were conducted by Tom Gillhespy, Marianayagam Francisk, Uruththira Sujatha, and Theiventhiram Kasitha, from September-December, 2003, and are on-going.

The TIA Team was jointly funded by UNHCR and NPA, but is now solely an NPA unit. Without the vision of both organisations, the value of having a permanent TIA unit to compliment Mine Action would not have been fully recognised and it is commendable that all parties and decision makers have facilitated this concept.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AGA	Assistant Government Agent
AOR	Area Of Responsibility
CEB	Ceylon Electricity Board
EOD	Explosive Ordnance Disposal
DPDHS	Deputy Provincial Director of Health Services
GA	Government Agent
GS	Grama Sevaka
HDU	Humanitarian Demining Unit
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IPKF	Indian Peace Keeping Force
LTTE	Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam
NPA	Norwegian People's Aid
RDA	Road Development Association
SLA	Sri Lankan Army
SLT	Sri Lanka Telecom
TA	Technical Advisor
TIA	Task Impact Assessment
TRO	Tamil's Rehabilitation Organisation
UAS	Unified Assistance Scheme
UXO	Unexploded Ordnance

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Despite peace, the remnants of the protracted civil war in Sri Lanka continue to disrupt people's lives, posing a physical as well as a psychological threat to those internally displaced persons (IDPs) that have returned, and contributes to the continued displacement of those that remain displaced. Landmines and UXO lie amidst a multitude of complex and interlinking problems. When IDPs return, they not only find their land mined, but their homes, businesses and commercial centres destroyed; their agricultural tools, fishing equipment and boats, livestock and possessions lost or stolen, and a political and social welfare system struggling with the consequences of 18 years of war combined with a dependency on outside assistance, which was high even before the conflict began.

Despite the landmine clearance only tackling one issue, the removal of mines cannot be underestimated and is a vital first step to the recovery, rehabilitation and development of Northern Sri Lanka, and certainly, socio-economic improvements can be attributed to the clearance process. Mine clearance conducted by NPA/HDU has encouraged and assisted the return of IDPs and improved the economic stability of target groups, as well as improving access to health and education facilities and religious sites. The reduction in psychological restrictions created by the fear of mines has also greatly benefited the local communities and landmine clearance continues to facilitate the recovery, rehabilitation and development of Northern Sri Lanka.

This report attempts to assess the social and economic benefits of landmine clearance conducted by HDU/NPA since the end of 2002. However, it is too early to adequately assess post-clearance land use and the associated benefits, and analysis is hindered further by the level of poverty¹ and the continued threat of mines in many of the villages where clearance has occurred². For these reasons this report should be seen as an interim assessment of the socio-economic benefits amidst continued NPA/HDU activity, and should, by no means, be deemed the entirety of benefits for the target groups discussed. This report also uses the socio-economic findings of clearance to look at the focus that future clearance should take and makes recommendations on how the activities and impacts of HDU and NPA can be strengthened.

2. BRIEF MILITARY HISTORY OF SURVEY AREA

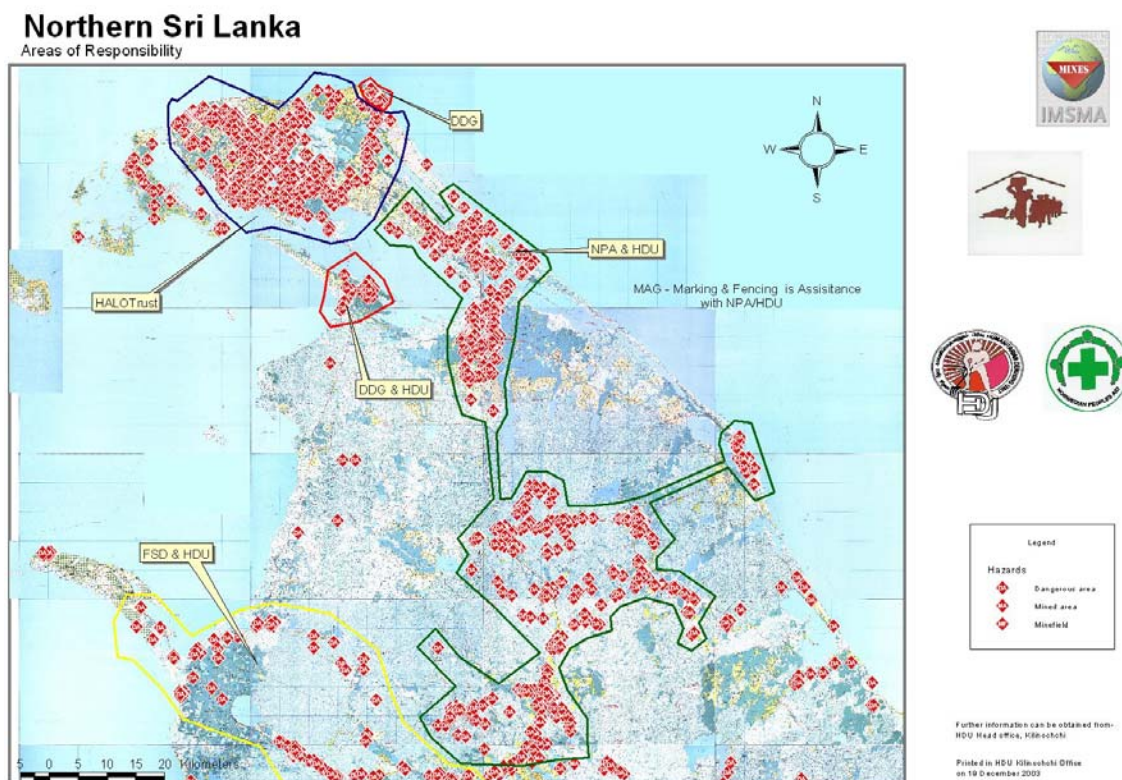
Sri Lanka has suffered a civil war, lasting almost two decades, which has had massive social and economic impacts on the entire country, but in particular the North and East. The activities of NPA/HDU have all occurred in the LTTE controlled area of Kilinochchi, Vavuniya, Mullaitivu and Jaffna Districts (from here on referred to as the HDU/NPA Area Of Responsibility), and it is the aim of NPA to assist HDU to

¹Beneficiaries can be so impoverished, economic indicators are difficult to evaluate.

²Up until the time of writing, the tasks have been set and prioritised by the Tamils Rehabilitation Organisation (TRO) who appear to have had a particular focus on education and health facilities and resettlement. Unfortunately, the resettlement tasks have not been combined with other community requirements, which has limited the potential socio-economic benefits, and resulted in a continued mine problem for many of the beneficiaries.

demine all areas within, but to date the majority of clearance has occurred North of Elephant Pass, which is the area that this survey has been based.

The following map shows the extent of the mine problem in Northern Sri Lanka and the areas of responsibility for each humanitarian demining organisation.



The area North of Elephant Pass suffered some of the heaviest fighting and greatest disruption during the conflict, changing hands between the Sri Lankan Army (SLA), Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) and the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) at varying times, resulting in prolonged, and often multiple, displacement of the local populations. Much of the displacement occurred in 1990 when the SLA gained control, with heavy fighting also taking place in 1997, 1998 and 2000. During SLA control an estimated 1 million mines were laid and only in 1998 did the SLA perform clearance to allow for the limited resettlement of IDPs. The resettlement that did occur was short lived, and the returned population was again displaced in 1998 when the LTTE conducted a counter-offensive, regaining control. The duration and intensity of the fighting, combined with the territorial inconsistencies, have created an entrenched and widespread mine threat affecting entire communities throughout the HDU/NPA Area Of Responsibility.



UXO awaiting disposal.

3. METHODOLOGY

The surveys used in this study were conducted over a four month period and involved over 200 interviews³. They covered every site where clearance tasks had been completed and the information gathered was multi-purposed, providing information for post-clearance reports required for each task site, pre-clearance reports where a mine threat continued and this, more generalised, socio-economic report. It should be noted that this study only concerns areas where demining has occurred and does not cover spot tasks where individual UXO were removed, nor tasks which verified that there was no mine threat. Each village was surveyed in the same way, in accordance with other NPA Mine Action programmes, using the following pattern:

1). Village Leader Interviews: Unfortunately, the TIA Team was not permitted to interview Government Agents (GAs), Assistant Government Agents (AGAs) nor Grama Sevakas (GSs) but on first visiting a village a semi-structured Village Leader interview was held to gain an overview of the community and the mine situation.

2). Household Interviews: Following the Village Leader interview semi-structured household interviews were conducted. These interviews were used to crosscheck information given by the Village Leader and other households, and provide the bulk of the statistical data used in this report.

3). Village Meetings: Each survey finished with a village meeting to validate significant findings and ensure reliability of information. These meetings were more for the pre-clearance reports, but it also contributed to the understanding of socio-economic impacts of the clearance that had occurred.

4). Psychosocial Questionnaires: Evaluated the psychological benefits of clearance.

A Note on Gender: The TIA Team consists of one male and two female Tamils, who conducted many of the interviews used for this report, and myself. I am not going to discuss how valuable my staff have been, as that is obvious, but it is interesting to note that the two female members of staff served for many years in the LTTE military wing.

I highlight this point because it has been seen in other post- conflict situations that female ex-combatants often return to their original roles or worse. Often they are reduced to a lower status than they were before they had any military association, finding it hard to marry and pushed to desperate measures. Throughout the surveys the TIA Team came across examples where female employment is being promoted, whether it be the AGA in Pallai promoting female vocational training or employment in construction of the A9. The value of promoting female empowerment and its impact on all aspects of development cannot be underestimated, and it is commendable that HDU is helping to promote this issue with the encouragement of NPA, facilitating equality and furthering the socio-economic recovery of target areas.

HDU also has a fully operational team of 42 female deminers.

³In some instances household information was invalid. Statistics that used a significantly lower pool of data have been highlighted.

4. SOCIO-ECONOMIC FINDINGS

The inconsistency of territorial control and associated forced displacement of the civilian population marginalised the internally displaced persons (IDPs) greatly, and such poverty has meant that resettlement and post-conflict recovery of livelihoods can be slow and problematic. This, combined with non-mine associated problems⁴, has limited the immediate socio-economic recovery of landmine clearance beneficiaries. Furthermore, until now, the priority setting of tasks has come from the Tamil's Rehabilitation Organisation (TRO) who appear to have had a particular focus on education and health facilities and resettlement. Unfortunately, the resettlement tasks have not been combined with other community requirements, which has limited the potential socio-economic benefits. This has resulted in a continued mine problem for many of the beneficiaries, and health and education rehabilitation has been restricted by the lack of available resources. Despite these restrictions, it is evident that normality is gradually returning to the local population, which has been facilitated by the activities of NPA/HDU.

Beneficiaries: Throughout this report, beneficiary figures refer to direct beneficiaries, unless stated otherwise. It is impossible to accurately estimate the number of indirect beneficiaries, but all village clearance tasks have improved mobility and community activities and can therefore be assumed to have benefited all 1,526 families (7,722 individuals) that have returned and potentially the 478 families (2,419 individuals) that are yet to return. The A9 road tasks have a very large number of indirect beneficiaries and by improving the commercial trade route between the North and South of the country, the tasks will have significant impacts on local and national economies, as well as promoting inter-community dialogue.

4.1 Typical Tamil Household

The average Tamil household has 5 members, and most are dependent on subsistence cultivation/fishing and labour work. Within the NPA/HDU Area Of Responsibility (HDU/NPA AOR) there is a diverse number of different livelihoods, with fishing, grazing, paddy and coconut cultivation in the North and paddy cultivation, fishing and forest products in the South. Generally a household will own ½ acre of land used for their house and garden, and ½ to 1 acre for arable products (paddy and/or coconuts). Most main incomes are supported by alternative livelihoods and the majority of children attend school.

⁴A lack of post-clearance assistance has hindered the full benefits that could have been achieved as a result of clearance.

Some images of the more typical aspects of a Tamil household:

Typically a family will live on a small plot of land with additional land elsewhere. However, this particular **household** is landless, squatting on some-one else's land and relying on food rations. The father is a labourer, but it seemed apparent that the money earned did not reach his family.



Paddy cultivation is a common livelihood for the majority of people living in the HDU/NPA AOR, as seen here in Olumadu.



Fishing is the main livelihood in Vadamarachchi East where much of the demining has occurred. Generally locals will work in teams, including women, with one or two men in charge.



Coconut cultivation occurs mostly in the North, providing a variety of sources of income from Toddy tapping by men to cadjun weaving by women.



Gardens provide valuable **alternative livelihoods** – here chillies are drying in the foreground and coconut trees growing in the background. Wood and palmyrah nuts have been collected, as well as barbed wire, which can be sold – a positive remnant of war.

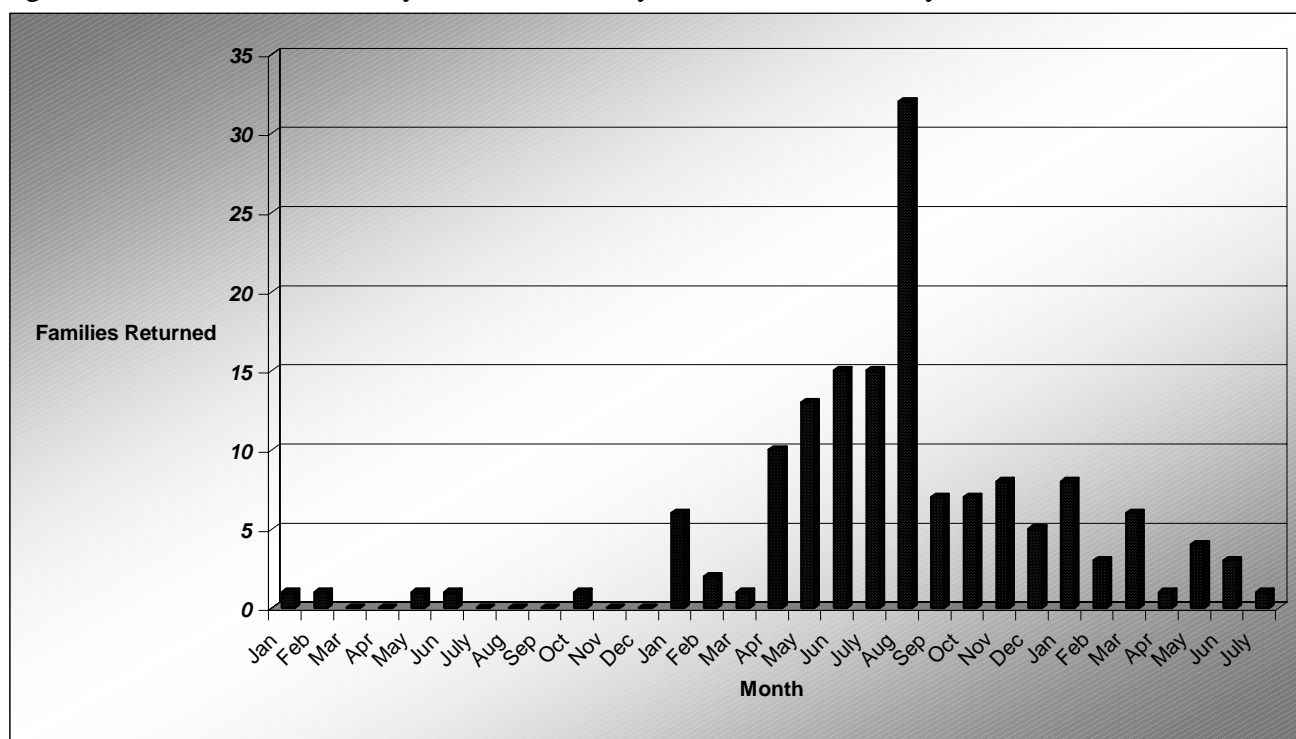


4.2 IDP Return and Resettlement

The level of displacement has caused massive disruption and the return of these people is essential for the recovery of the economy and return to normality. Psychologically, it is very important to the people to return to their homes and begin to rebuild their lives, reducing their dependency on outside assistance and enabling them to move towards sustainable development and recovery of livelihoods.

In the 14 survey villages, the entire populations were displaced during the conflict, and return began after the peace process started in 2001, but most returned during 2002. As can be seen in the following figure, the trend in return appears to have slowed in the latter half of 2002 as those immediately wanting to return have done so. This is important to realise and puts the focus of mine clearance on those who have returned, as well as raising questions as to why the remaining displaced have not returned.

Fig. 4.2.1: IDP Return of Surveyed Households By Month, Jan 2001-July 2003



It has been the on-going task of HDU/NPA to relieve resettlement land from the threat of mines and facilitate the relocation of IDPs onto their own property. Fifty percent of demining tasks that have occurred have directly led to the resettlement of IDPs onto their own land in 8 villages, with 187 families moving into cleared land and a further 93 families that remain displaced, able to resettle if and when they return. In addition to this, 70 landless newly wed families will be allocated cleared land by their respective GS⁵.

⁵GS is the local representative of the AGA.

Excluding the newly weds, the clearance has directly supported the resettlement of 946 people, with the potential to support a further 471 people in the future.

- Families resettled on cleared land: 187
- Families not yet resettled on cleared land: 93
- Newly weds to be allocated cleared land: 70

Despite a strong desire to be home and the clearance of household land, 29.8% of the total population displaced throughout the war, have chosen to remain displaced, which can be attributed to the complexity of factors influencing IDP decisions. Due to this complexity it is difficult to estimate the impact that clearance has on IDP decisions, but, what is clear, is that 79.8% of returnees surveyed, risked the threat of mines, returning to their villages before clearance began. However, a large number have still chosen not to return, with many families influenced by health and education facilities, poor housing and continued mine threats. Using poor housing as an example, the gravity of non-mine problems can be seen. In 11 of the survey villages, details on housing were gathered, and the following details can be extrapolated from the information:

- Villages surveyed: 11
- Useable houses: 57
- Unusable houses: 1,473



House damaged by shells, Talaiyady.

It is not expected that all IDPs will return, but when 96.3% of homes cannot immediately be inhabited, it is understandable that clearance alone has often not been enough for all potential IDPs to resettle.

The implications of these additional factors mean that the socio-economic impacts of clearance may not be fully realised until all other issues are addressed. It can, therefore, be assumed that there will be increased resettlement onto cleared land as development of other sectors improves.

Figures 1 and 2 show the main influencing factors on decisions to return and to remain displaced. The returned families that were surveyed were asked why they had returned and the reasons why they thought other families have not returned. It should be noted that figure 2 is based on the perceptions of IDPs that have returned and not the direct opinions of the IDPs that have not returned.

Fig. 4.2.2: Reasons for IDP Return

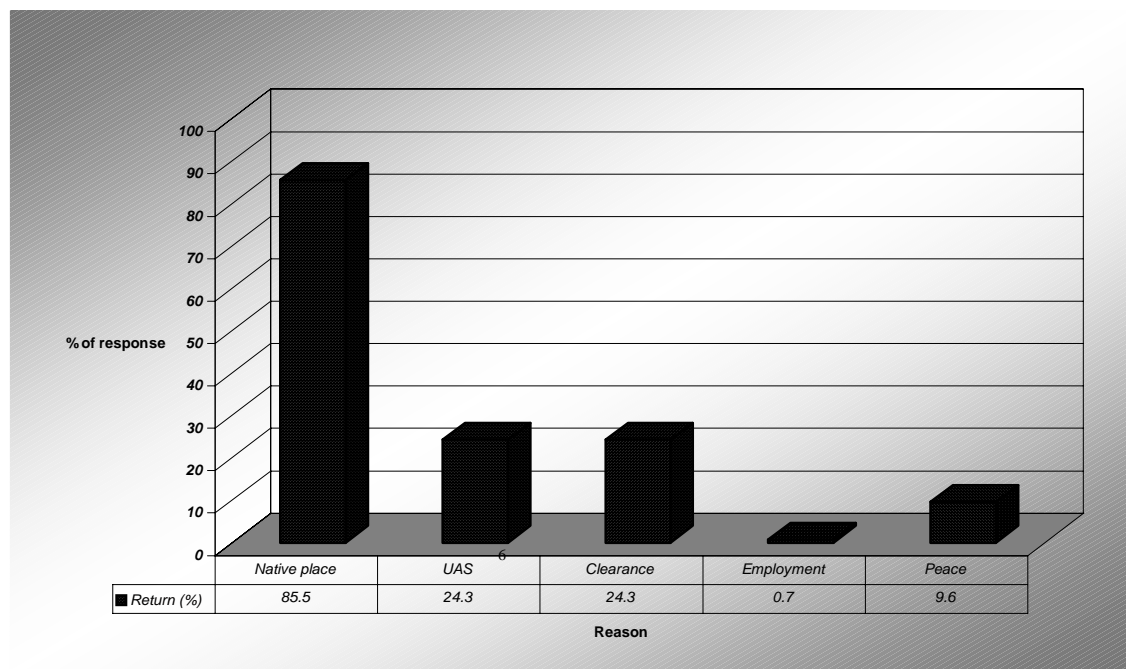
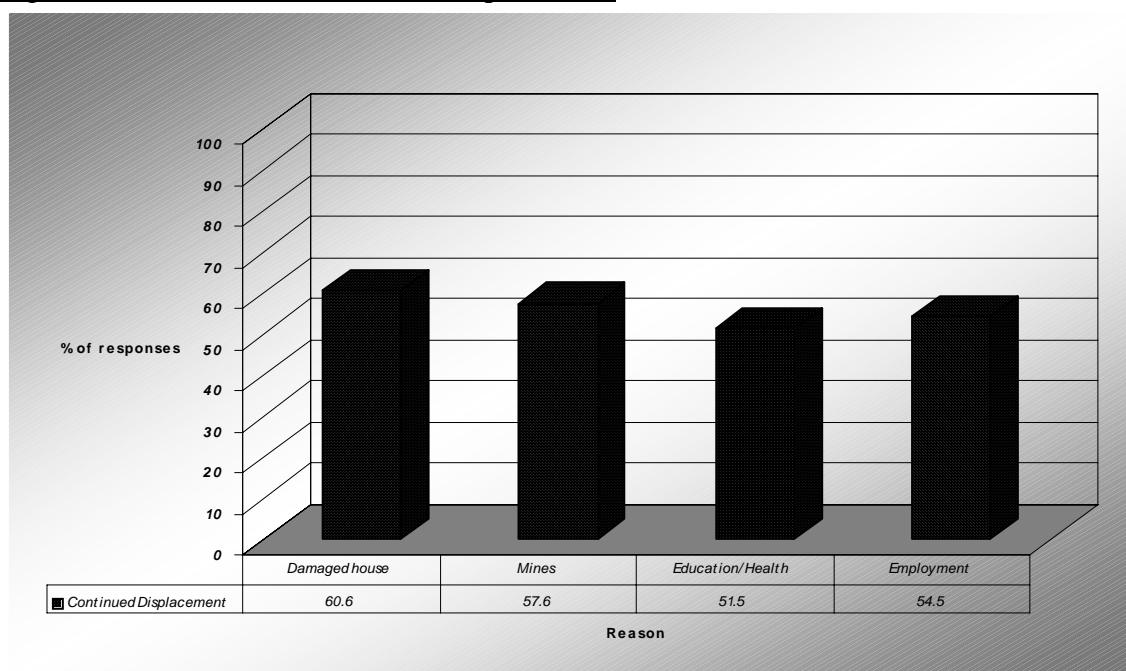


Fig. 4.2.3: Reasons for Continued Displacement



⁶UAS refers to the Government's 'Unified Assistance Scheme', which allocates a returning household with Rs. 25,000 (previously the value was Rs. 15,000)

This pattern of IDP choices is significant for future HDU/NPA clearance tasks in 2004. As can be seen in Fig. 4.2.2, UAS is deemed an important influencing factor for return, demonstrating that an immediate, one-off monetary handout is important. This desire for economic assistance is substantiated by the occurrence of employment in 54.5% of responses for continued displacement (the difference in the significance of employment in Fig. 4.2.2 and Fig. 4.2.3 may be due to the fact that the question was asked via returned IDPs which may have influenced this outcome). Unfortunately for the returnees, many of them did not receive UAS, with some village recipient rates as low as 20% of eligible families. In order to assist in the economic stability of IDPs and increase the importance of clearance, greater consideration should be given to tasks that promote income generation and stability of livelihoods. As can be seen in the following section, the attention given to clearance of paddy and plantation, the main sources of income in target areas, has been limited.

4.3 Income Generation

As already stated, the focus of clearance tasks has been away from income generation and food security, and more on clearing housing plots for resettlement, but economic benefits have still been achieved. In particular, families typically grow coconuts and a variety of cash crops in their gardens, which, although not always sold, will reduce the amount of food needed to be bought and provide an alternative livelihood.

6 task sites had economic benefits for the target groups, but 4 of these were ‘bi-products’ of clearance aimed at resettlement. The most specific income generating task was HDU 001, a plantation in Pallai, which, 14 months after clearance, has had no formal economic benefits, although irregular collection of the coconuts may have taken place by unauthorised users. At the time of writing, the plantation showed signs of being cultivated for the first time and it is therefore expected that the clearance of this site will bring economic benefits in the future, particularly through employment of Vanangkerny villagers⁷.

Perhaps the most economically beneficial village tasks have been those that improved access to the sea and provided areas for net and fish preparation. Such tasks have been completed in Thalaiyady, Kaddaikadu, Vettalakerny and Vathiryan, benefiting 590 families within those villages, and 540 seasonal fishermen who come from outside of the area. These tasks have cleared areas of beach, enabling freedom of movement up and down the beach, increasing the area accessible and, therefore, relieving restrictions on fishing and mobility within the village. However, these fishing villages have approximately 2km of coastline to use as access to the sea and unless the restriction is in the middle of the village it is not necessarily a priority. For example, the Thalaiyady task was outside of the village and did not really aid the villagers themselves, although 3 or 4 families have resettled on that land. This land would have had to be cleared at some point, but clearance in other areas would have created larger benefits – for example,

⁷Vanangkerny is a neighbouring village. 90% of the 190 families are dependent on labour work.

Kottandarkulam (near the Basket Weaving Village), has paddy land and resettlement land totally blocked by a mine belt. With a similar amount of clearance as Thalaiyady, 25 families would have access to paddy land and 10 families would be able to resettle on their own land. It would also encourage the return of 14 families and increase access to forest.

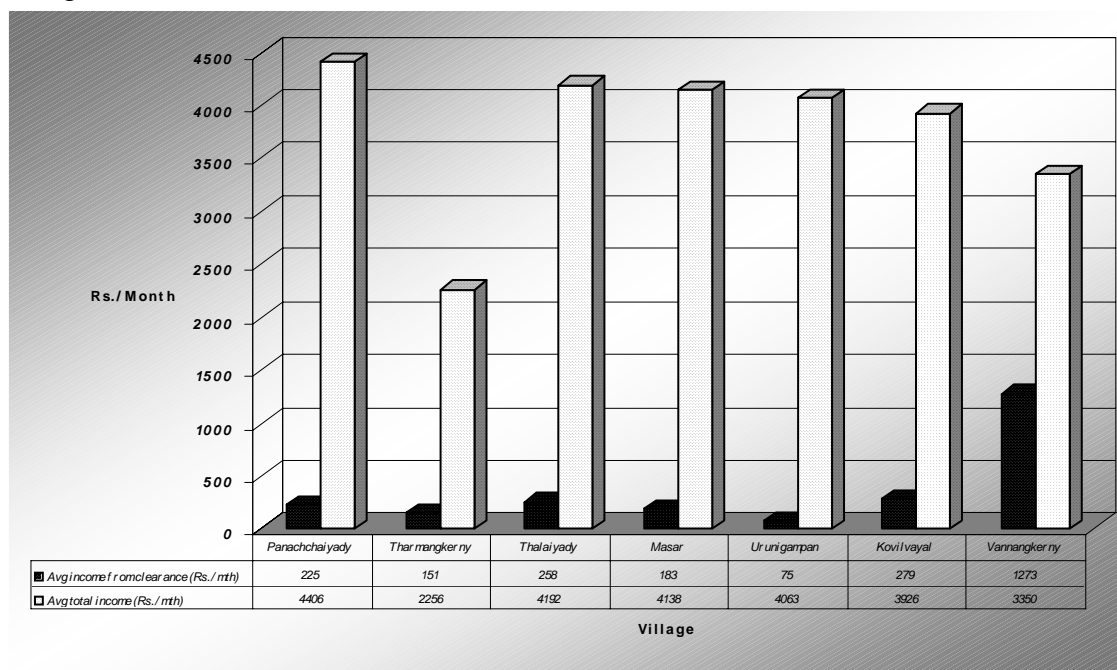
As in the above case, agricultural and plantation clearance has received little attention, and has only occurred specifically in Thamangkerny (HDU 081), providing an income to 110 families; 100% of returnees. Figure 2.3.1 shows the contribution clearance has had on the average income in Thamangkerny, but again, the land had not been re-used at the time of survey, but is being re-used at the time of writing and the income generated is expected to be higher in the future. What is significant about Thamangkerny is the high number of beneficiaries when income generation is targeted specifically.



Thamangkerny villager cultivating cleared land.

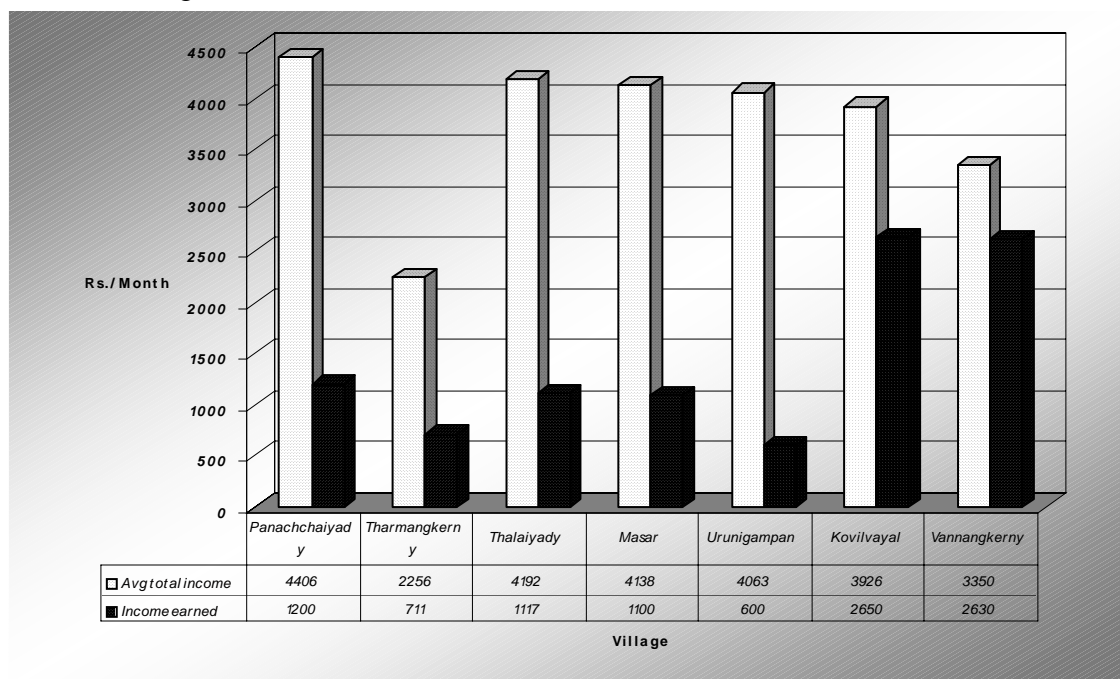
Figure 4.3.1 shows the limited contribution clearance has had to the average total income for 8 villages selected at random. The largest contribution to income is in Vanangkerny, which, along with Thalaiyady, has been completely cleared of mines, and has no remaining problem. The difference in Thalaiyady is that there still remains a shortage of nets and boats, which restricts the economic benefits of clearance.

Fig: 4.3.1: Average Income from Clearance and Average Total Income for 8 Random Villages



If the income generated is viewed by beneficiary i.e. only those that did earn an income from clearance, then the impacts are greater. Clearance has improved income generation for few people, but for those that have benefited, the economic impacts have been important, as can be seen in the chart below. This demonstrates that, although economic impacts have been low, in future, with informed guidance and more of a focus on income, clearance can significantly improve people's lives.

Fig. 4.3.2: Average Income for Economic Beneficiaries and Average Total Income for 8 Random Villages



Despite the limited impacts on income generation, the state of local markets has improved, which is largely due to improved access and subsequent increased trade.

- 93.3% of beneficiaries felt improved access to markets after clearance
- 55% of beneficiaries felt trade had improved since clearance

As the trend in IDP return seems to be slowing, it is clear that there are ulterior motives for the remaining displacement and these contributing socio-economic factors need to be addressed. Offering a family a destroyed house but no form of income is not an enticement for them to return and all factors that influence their lives need to be considered.

4.4 Infrastructure

4.4.1 Road Tasks

In January 2003, HDU were approached by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) to assist the reconstruction of the A9 – the only open trade route between the North and South. The majority of all clearance tasks (19) conducted by HDU/NPA have been A9 tasks, involving 12 demining teams over 7 months, and allowed the Road Development Association (RDA) to begin reconstruction. These clearance tasks have greatly



A9 construction provided employment for women

improved trade between Jaffna and Colombo. Up to 1500 vehicles travel along the A9 daily, directly and indirectly contributing to the lives of the 900,000 people living in A9 towns between Jaffna and Vavuniya, and greatly benefiting the economy at a local and national level. It has also directly provided employment for over 450 people, including 70-80 women, supporting 2,277 people. The impact to the national economy of these tasks must not be underestimated, as well as the injection of purchasing power from wages into the local communities.

One other road task, at Iyakachchi junction, improved access to education, health and market facilities for 4 villages, totalling 185 returned families, and improved access to and from Iyakachchi and Vadamarachchi East.

4.4.2 Power Tasks

Towards the end of 2003 a HDU demining team was assigned to clearing sites required for the erection of electricity pylons. The project, funded by the EU, will allow the Ceylon Electricity Board (CEB) to supply electricity to Vavuniya, Kilinochchi, and Mullaitivu Districts. The contribution that electricity makes to the development of an area is high, from enabling school children to study after dark to the use of more advanced technology. The supply of electricity will greatly boost the economy within the HDU/NPA AOR and improve people's standard of living.

4.4.3 Communications Tasks

As with the CEB, NPA/HDU has also assisted Sri Lanka Telecom to install telephone lines within Kilinochchi town, serving over 140,000 people and again contributing to the local economy. The installation of telephone lines will also assist HDU/NPA, as an absence of communication has hindered the efficiency of the programme.

4.5 Education

One of the first priorities of the mine action in the HDU/NPA AOR has been the rehabilitation of education facilities. It is essential for teachers, pupils and parents to feel safe before normal activities can resume, and contractors will not begin construction until a certificate has been issued by HDU, declaring the area a low risk area. The wider social impacts of school clearance are high, not only providing education to a large number of students, but very often they serve as community meeting places and offer monthly immunisation clinics for all children in the surrounding areas.

Education facilities are regarded very highly by the local communities and have direct economic implications for any society. One of the main reasons for many IDPs to remain displaced is due to education, particularly those displaced to Jaffna where facilities are superior to that of the HDU/NPA AOR. The affect of education on IDP movement is evident in that many parents return without their children or return at the end of an academic year, causing minimal disruption to their children's education.

Clearance has directly resulted in the opening of 5 schools in Pallai, Ittavil, Thamangkerny, Iyakachchi and Kovivayal, providing education to 1,269 students, with the capacity for a further 1,346. The educational facilities can, therefore, provide a service to returning IDPs, influencing their return. The most significant school task has been Pallai School, which is in the 1A/B category⁸, which provides primary education up to A-Level and is the only A-Level facility North of Kilinochchi. It is expected that as a result of these clearance tasks, IDP return will increase prior to the forthcoming new academic year in January. For example, 30 families are expected to return to Thalaiyady after the December O'Level examinations and, as assistance and available resources for education facilities improve, so will the socio-economic benefits attributable to clearance.

The following data has been extrapolated from household interviews, and shows that clearance has had a significant impact, but a lack of resources for post-clearance rehabilitation limits the impact of clearance:

- Education facilities have improved since clearance: 37.3%
- Education facilities have not improved since clearance: 44.1%
(All gave reasons for non-improvement as a lack of facilities and not due to clearance.)
- No data available: 18.6%



Pallai School re-opened immediately after clearance

⁸1A/B schools are the highest level of education before University, offering 4 A-Levels, compared to the usual 2.

4.6 Health

As with education, health facilities are one of the main reasons for non-return of IDPs and a common complaint of IDPs that have returned. To date, only one hospital task has been conducted which was in Pallai town, providing a service to the entire Pachchilapallai division (population: 9,124) and much of Vadamarachchi East (population: 16,548). Unfortunately, little assistance has been available to rehabilitate the hospital and 13 months after clearance it is no closer to opening. World Vision has pledged money to rebuild the doctor's quarters and the Deputy Provincial Director of Health Services (DPDHS) has plans to transfer doctors and nurses from other areas when the hospital opens, but without further assistance the hospital remains closed.



Pallai Hospital still closed.

For the clearance to have any social impact on surrounding communities, further assistance is required to provide the hospital with the resources it needs. However, as mentioned above, the schools that have been cleared provide child immunisation clinics to all surrounding villages.

4.7 Religious Sites

Religion is a very important part of Tamil Society, and access to religious sites and the ability to hold religious ceremonies cannot be underestimated. Often villagers will value religious sites over agricultural or household land, and clearance of such tasks undoubtedly benefits all those of the respective faith within the village. Religious ceremonies are not only important aspects of faith, but they also promote social cohesion within the communities, provide a valuable opportunity to strengthen inter- and intra-community bonds and return a sense of normality to the people. Furthermore, the psychological benefits are especially important after the trauma of war and religion is a valuable coping mechanism.



Passing driver praying in front of mined temple, A9.

HDU/NPA has performed 5 tasks, which have enabled access to a religious site.

Table 4.7.1: Religious Sites Cleared and Associated Beneficiaries

Religious Site	Number	Location	Individual Beneficiaries
Graveyard	1	Iyakachchi	354
Temple	2	Pallai Hospital; Ittavil	218
Church	2	Kaddaikadu; Ittavil	1,422

4.8 Psychological Benefits

The psychological impacts of landmines is arguably the heaviest burden on local populations, creating an environment of fear that restricts day to day activities and hinders the return to normality of post-conflict communities. The psychological impacts of landmine clearance is best seen through a change in people's emotions and levels of stress. This study has used a limited number of psychosocial questionnaires in four random villages and will be conducted on a wider scale after further clearance has occurred. The results highlight the reduction in stress resulting from clearance, but also the fear of a continued mine threat.

- People fearing mines after war: 100%
- People feel danger has reduced after clearance: 92%
- People who feel safer because a demining agency is available: 100%
- People who have a continued fear of mines after clearance: 58%

4.9 HDU Staff

Currently HDU, funded by NPA, employ over 600 staff on an average monthly wage of Rs. 10,000, significantly contributing to the purchasing power within local communities. It is also important to note that the staff come from all over Sri Lanka and the benefits are therefore widespread and not just in areas where clearance occurs. Furthermore, since the arrival of NPA, injuries incurred by deminers have been zero, compared to an estimated 16 before NPA assistance began.

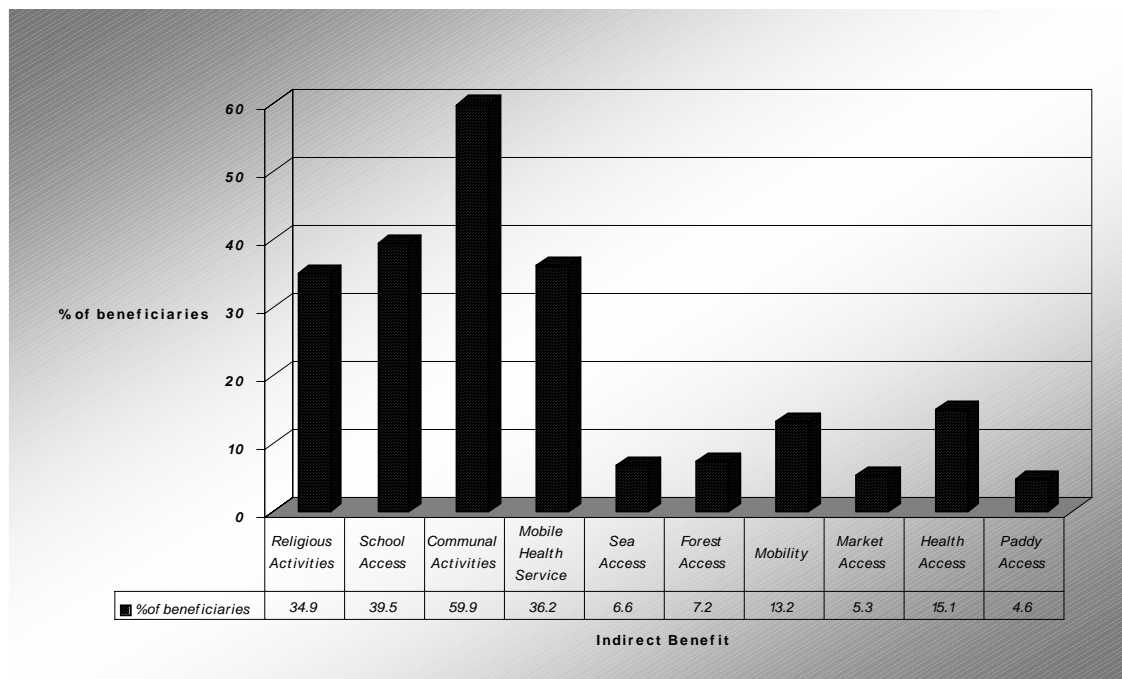


In October, 2003, 80 new deminers were trained, bringing the number of deminers to 600

4.10 Indirect Benefits

Indirect benefits of clearance can often be as valuable as the direct impacts, and certainly, increased mobility and freedom of movement are highly valued impacts of clearance, which go beyond individual owners of cleared land and impact the entire village and even surrounding communities. 91.4% of those surveyed had benefited indirectly from clearance and the following figures represents the different indirect impacts experienced:

Fig 4.10.1: Indirect Impacts and Percent of Target Groups Benefiting



This chart indicates the positive feedback effects of clearance, and, in particular, community activities are a very positive and regularly occurring indirect benefit. Other benefits, such as visits from a mobile health service, are also important, and without clearance, assistance such as this will often not be given. As far as income generation and food security are concerned, the indirect impacts have been low, supporting the view that more focus needs to be given specifically to these areas.



A festival in Iyakachchi attracts much of the community.

5. CONCLUSIONS OF 2003

To date, the clearance performed has brought social and economic benefits, but in too many cases these benefits could have been much higher and only two villages, where demining activities have taken place, do not have a continued mine problem. The most significant weakness within the demining process is a poor knowledge of target group requirements and a lack of communication with the target groups prior to clearance, coupled with no evaluation of benefits or remaining mine problems after clearance.

Another problem is the lack of post-clearance assistance, which hinders the potential for clearance to lead to the recovery of sustainable livelihoods, and misses a valuable opportunity to combine the efforts of individual INGO and NGO support for post-conflict rehabilitation. With greater co-ordination international agencies could greatly increase the benefits of their work and donor money, ultimately resulting in higher positive impacts for the local communities. When the issues of post-conflict recovery are so complex, any one issue tackled in isolation will always have limited, and even negligible, consequences, whether this be mine clearance or any other form of assistance. It is also important to remember that post-conflict assistance is not just about immediate relief, but about the entire process towards sustainable development, incorporating all stages of assistance from a variety of different agencies.

To date, the focus seems to have been on resettlement land, which, although important, no single factor should dominate the focus of demining activities. It is recommended that a more holistic approach is adopted for mine clearance, analysing all factors that influence people's lives and view task sites, not as sections of mine belt, but as village or community tasks - approach the community, discuss what is needed within that community, prioritise communities and prioritise tasks within those communities, and, where possible, the demining team should not move until the community in question is no longer restricted by mines.

The following sections of this report suggest how the TIA Team can assist in the future and make recommendations for 2004.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR 2004

6.1 Socio-Economic Reporting

The analysis of community needs should be conducted by the TIA Team, and once understood, villages can be prioritised for clearance. Where possible village tasks should not be conducted until they have been surveyed by the TIA Team, which can be completed in a similar amount of time that it would take to move a demining team from another task, providing the knowledge needed to maximise use of resources and impacts on target groups.

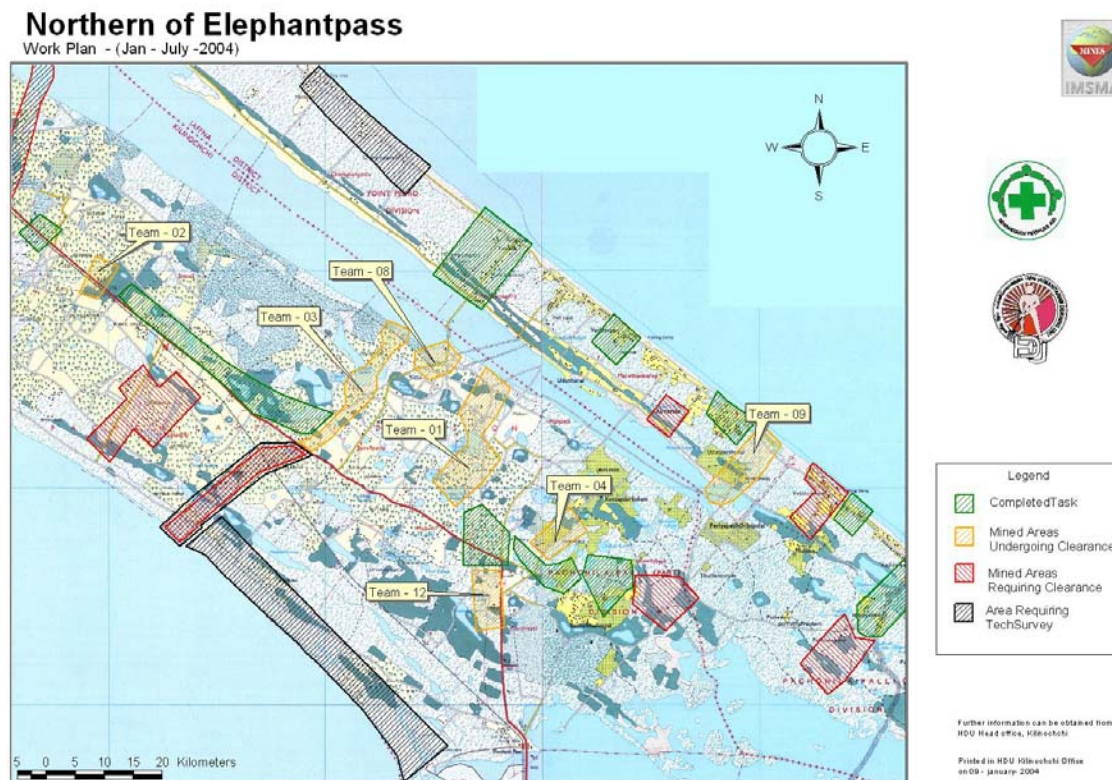
The socio-economic surveys have multiple values for the demining operation, used for:

1. Pre-clearance prioritisation (8 villages have been prioritised to date)
2. Accumulating detailed information of areas to be cleared
3. On-going clearance assessments (as much as possible the clearance will be monitored and community communication will continue to check that no new issues have arisen)
4. Post-clearance impact evaluation
5. Identification of any remaining mine problems
6. Dissemination of post-clearance requirements to the relevant agencies
7. Assessment of overall socio-economic impacts of the entire demining operation
8. Spot EOD task surveys once explosives have been disposed
9. Verification tasks which clarify no mine threat

To date, the results of the socio-economic surveys have been presented in the 'Impact Indicators Table' and attempted to display uniform information for each site. Although the consistency of information makes it easier to compare the benefits of different task sites, the socio-economic impacts are too varied to do each site justice. The TIA Team, with input from the TA's, has revised the current survey methodology. Each pre-clearance survey will produce its own individual impacts table, specific to the anticipated benefits of that site. This will capture the benefits of the clearance in more detail and therefore greater accuracy, but, most importantly, it will quickly and accurately identify impacts that have not been achieved, highlighted by the post-clearance survey, and any failings can then be questioned and lessons learnt. See Annexed.

Mid-2004 should see the completion of the North. This area can be used as the larger socio-economic study as, by the end of 2004, it will have had time to reap the benefits of clearance, it represents a varied situation, ranging from small Hindu villages near the A9, to larger Christian fishing villages in Vadamarachchi East. It is also relatively independent with its own schools up to A-Level, a commercial centre and a hospital. NGOs will also be more active in these areas and therefore the benefits of improved co-ordination and post-clearance assistance can be assessed. By concentrating the more in depth study in one manageable area will relieve the workload of the TIA Team, and allow for prioritisation and more reliable and complete pre-clearance data to be gathered for the South.

The following map shows which areas have been cleared and outline the plan of action for the first half of 2004. With a concentration of demining activity in the North, the TIA Team can focus on the South in anticipation of the movement of all demining teams in July.



6.2 Clearance Communication

In many cases the benefits of clearance are not realised due to a lack of communication between HDU and the target groups. This has been due to the failings of HDU itself, or due to the inefficiency of the communication process. For example, if the GS or village leader is informed of the areas that have and have not been cleared, this often does not reach the villagers or they are only told on inquiring themselves. To avoid this breakdown in communication, community liaising should be incorporated both before and after clearance as described below.

6.2.1 Pre-Clearance Communication

Ideally any communication concerning the whole village should be conducted through village meetings, however, too many village meetings should be avoided, and it is recommended that a reliable and respected village member be selected for before and during tasks. The selection of such an individual to disseminate any information can quickly and easily be identified by the TIA Team during their pre-clearance assessments, and the TA or Demining Team Leader can outline the clearance that is going to occur,

and confirm any areas that will continue to pose a threat. When necessary, they can also act as a contact between HDU and the village, which is particularly important if the task site is to be suspended.

6.2.2 Post-Clearance Communication

On completion of the clearance a planned village meeting should be held to ensure that all villagers understand, and have been informed of, the areas that are free from danger and any areas that still pose a threat - this can be viewed as part of the clearance process itself and need not impose on TRO's desire to lead all official handovers. It is important that this communication is conducted through a planned village meeting, ensuring that as many people as possible understand which areas are safe and which are not, and that the intra-village communication does not become Chinese Whispers.

The importance of such direct communication can not be underestimated, as the TIA Team has found that it is all too common for confusion within the village to limit the benefits of the clearance and could potentially increase the danger of any remaining mined areas. To reduce confusion further, 'pockets' of clearance should also be avoided, and where possible permanent landmarks should indicate the boundaries of cleared areas. For example, if an area that has been requested for clearance stops 100m South of a road, continue the clearance North until the clearance hits that road. It is then very clear to the villagers that the South side of the road is cleared but the North is not.



A woman in Muhavil explains where her mine problem is during a village meeting.

6.3 Technical Surveys that Confirm No Mine Threat

In addition to poor communication when demining does take place, there is also a problem when confirming that there is no mine threat, referred to as 'cancelled land'. A good example of this is Iyakachchi School, which, prior to a visit from the TIA Team, had been visited before by other HDU staff (the head teacher claimed there had been 10 visits, although this is unlikely, it does suggest that there was more than one). The school had requested that the South side of the school be cleared of any contamination in order to develop additional facilities and expand its capacity. The area was surveyed and HDU realised that there was no mine threat and only a small UXO threat, unfortunately this information was not passed on to the school, and as a result, the contractors refused to work. The TIA Team chased this up and were quickly provided with a letter to give to the school. Within a week the contractors had begun work.

In such instances as this, written confirmation should be provided on site, with an official, pre-formulated form and letter completed and given to the owner of the land at the time of survey. This will avoid any backlog or distraction from issuing certificates.

7. CONCLUDING WORDS

This report has attempted to identify trends in IDP motivation and needs, strengths and weaknesses of clearance, the importance of monitoring the impacts of clearance and improved co-ordination of NGOs, and make recommendations for the future. The suggestions made are not final from a TIA perspective and it is hoped that they stimulate discussions among all relevant parties in order to work together and improve efficiency of the resources available, and, through taking a more holistic approach, all organisations can work together and ultimately maximise the benefits for the target groups.

ANNEX I

Hypothetical Use of Evaluation Table.

The following is a hypothetical situation where mines are restricting access to a forest, paddy land, resettlement land and a temple.

The first 3 columns will be filled with the information found during the pre-clearance survey, which most importantly will provide information on the expected benefits of landmine clearance. Through these predictions, villages, and sites within those villages, can be prioritised, and information regarding post-clearance assistance can be disseminated to non-mine related NGOs. The information will then be handed to HDU to facilitate the decision making process of task site allocation and provide an insight of the mine problem from the perspective of the target groups. Furthermore, the surveys will provide baseline data with which to compare post-clearance information. This comparison between the predicted benefits and actual benefits can then act as a monitoring tool to assess the impacts of landmine clearance and identify strengths and weaknesses.

On completion of the clearance by the demining teams, the TIA Team will return to each site and conduct follow-up surveys – Do the villagers feel there is no remaining mine threat? Do they all understand which areas have or have not been cleared? Are there any remaining problems? Have the expected benefits been achieved? If not, why? Is it the clearance or is it a lack of post-clearance assistance? How can any issues be improved for the future? These follow-up surveys will then complete the table, and, if no mine threat remains, the village will be declared mine free, and the final report completed. If a mine threat does remain then the site will be returned to the prioritisation stage of the process.

Information collated from pre-clearance survey, describing current restrictions and anticipated impacts of clearance

Findings of the post-clearance survey, and the impacts achieved. Have the anticipated benefits been realised? If not, why? What can be learnt for next time?

IMPACT EVALUATION TABLE							
Expected Impacts		Action Points Available	Comments	Clearance Completion	Action Points Awarded	Actual Impacts	Conclusions
Mines	Land free of danger	10	IMSMA ID LK-MF-7691	Success	10	Land free of danger	IMSMA minefield removed
UXO	Land free of danger	10	Heavy conflict occurred in 1999/2000 – UXO present	Success	10	Land free of danger	BAC performed
Land Re-used	240 acres of paddy re-used by 60 households	10	40 acres are mined, 200 acres are inaccessible	Success	10	240 acres of paddy cultivated 60 households earning an average Rs. 8,000/harvest Reduced dependency on government rations	Improved standard of living Increased capital Increased food security and sustainability
Access to forest	Reduced fuel wood collection time	10	Currently women have to walk 2km, fuel collection takes 4hrs a day	Success	10	Access to forest improved Fuel collection takes 1hr each day 2hrs extra each day to weave cadjun =Rs.1,200/mth income 1hr extra spent on preparing food	Increased standard of living Improved child nutrition Empowerment of women within household

Continued on next page...

The post-clearance survey highlights any anticipated impacts that were not achieved, allowing for identification of any weaknesses in the process. In this case it is lack of co-ordination between NPA/HDIU and other NGOs

Expected Impacts		Action Points Available	Comments	Clearance Completion	Action Points Awarded	Actual Impacts	Conclusions
Access to religious site	Prayers by villagers	10	Temple blocked by mines	Success	10	Villagers able to pray each day	Important religious activities possible
	Religious festivals re-commenced					First festival held since IDPs returned	
Resettlement	Resettlement of 20 families	10	20 acres mined, families forced to live on adjacent land not owned by themselves	Failure	0	Houses are too badly damaged to occupy, families lack capital to rebuild, staying on previous land	Outside assistance for shelter and housing construction required
IDP return	30 families return from Jaffna District	10	Lack of access to temple influencing continued displacement of remaining IDPs	Success	10	18 families returned after clearance, remaining 12 have begun new lives elsewhere	All IDPs wanting to return to village have done so
Psychological	Villagers feel no threat from mines	10	Villagers mobility currently restricted due to mine threat	Success	10	No villagers feel any remaining threat from mines	All villagers move freely without fear of mines
TOTAL POINTS		70			60		

Points available are used as an evaluation tool and do not refer to any priority setting between tasks. If all available points are achieved, then the clearance has been a complete success.

TIA Workflow

